Dragon Runner Unmanned Vehicle

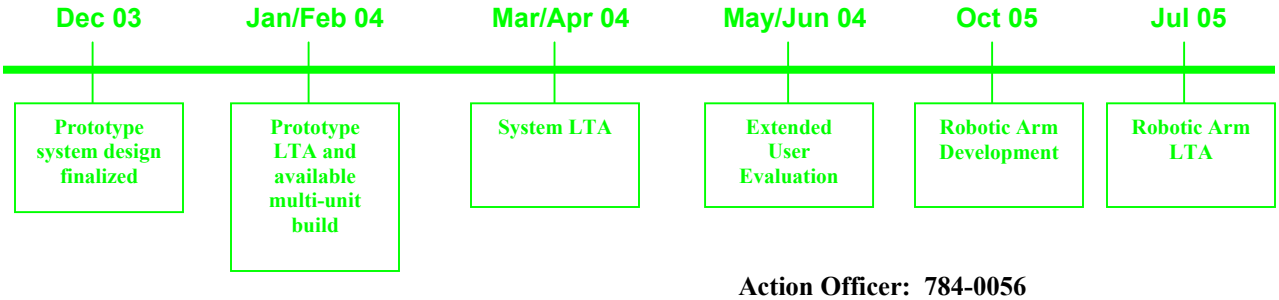
Purpose: To improve a small unit's situational awareness and force protection by extending their limit of observation through the use of mobile ground sensors.

Background: Small units have always relied on their own eyes and ears for tactical Reconnaissance Surveillance and Target Acquisition (RSTA) and force protection. In today's battlefields, small unit leaders are increasingly called upon to enter urban or similar complex hostile environments. In such environments, tactical units need a small, low-risk, organic capability to rapidly conduct RSTA and small unit force protection. Such a capability will significantly mitigate the high risk to personnel operating in asymmetric environments. The Dragon Runner will be deployed at the small unit level within the ground combat element. It will increase the employing unit's RSTA capability to observe tactical objectives and danger areas beyond the unit's line of sight. Dragon Runner will accomplish this by providing real-time, "around the corner", imagery directly to operational elements at the small unit level given the tactical situation. Dragon Runner also provides a man-portable limited tactical force protection capability while in "Sentry Mode" by increasing the real-time feedback to the small unit leader.

Description: Initial prototype systems are comprised of three components: Vehicle, Operator Control System and Handheld Controller. The current system features an all wheel drive, skid steer vehicle, improved 6x zoom camera that provides color as well as black and white real-time imagery, mission payload interface, custom backpack, and an improved handheld controller that includes single joystick operation, transflective display, tactile alerts, and an On-Screen-Display that provides system status to the operator at the touch of a button.

Deliverable Product(s): Prototypes and assessment based on operational experimentation.

Milestones:



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